

TITLE: Information From Non-contextual Artifacts: An In-depth Examination of the Donated Lamar and Mary Fowler Holcomb Collection

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Introduction: The Lamar and Mary Fowler Holcomb Collection was donated in 2014 to The Cherokee County Historical Society in Cherokee County, Georgia. Acquisition of Long Swamp Creek artifacts occurred by continuous removal on the Holcomb's property, adjacent to archaeological site 9CK1. CRM Edward-Pitman investigated 9CK1. Their archaeologists went through routine excavation techniques, providing a contextual basis for the artifacts recovered (Lewis III et al. 2014:29). However, the Holcomb's did not know routine excavation techniques, removing all contextual information for the artifacts. While style and manufacturing techniques of the artifacts can provide some information, loss of the contextual information dramatically limits the inferences we can make. That said, the pipes from the collection will be examined in detail to provide as much information as possible about the ancient Native Americans who inhabited this site centuries ago.

Methods: Within the collection, sixty-six of the artifacts were pipes. These pipes were measured with calipers, plastic 6"/0.001". Weights of the pipes and pipe fragments were also taken. The whole set of pipes were photographed using a Nikon DX AF-S 18-55mm lens. With the help of current literature regarding pipes and pipe structures, the pipes were categorized based on stylistic attributes.

Results: The pipes from the collection represent a diversity of forms. The pipes were made from several different sources of clay, some had tool marks embedded in them. Though some pipes were equal in height, the weight was not, suggesting different crafting techniques. Several pipes were incised; a few were more ornate.

Conclusion: Using analysis techniques current within the field of archaeology; data was recovered regarding these pipes. The morphology of the pipes suggest different occupational episodes at the site. Some of the pipes suggest that there may have been a progression of trial and error, as several did not have charcoal residue and had additional fractures, compared to pipes that did. The Lamar and Mary Fowler Holcomb Collection will need further examination to gain a more informed interpretation of the artifacts in relations to the Long Swamp Creek. My research on the pipe fragments in this collection is a step in that direction.

Keywords: Long Swamp Creek, Lamar and Mary Fowler Holcomb Collection, ancient Native American, ancient Native American pipes, Context, Archaeology, 9CK1

References:

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